

Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2009

Members: Darian Unger, Evan Glass, Megan Moriarty, Mitch Warren, Phil Olivetti Mark Woodard and Casey Anderson and others.

Members Absent: Marilyn Seitz

Call to Order and Introduction: Darian Unger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board unanimously approved the September 2009 minutes.

Community Comments:

Marcie Stickle announced that:

- Silver Spring's very own Buffalo Soldier James (Pat) Harden Daugherty and his wife Dorothy participated in the Buffalo Soldier Reunion meeting at the Silver Spring Hilton Hotel, 10/10/09.
- Jim Dandy, also known as Rev. Samuel Myers, is receiving the Neil Potter Special Achievement Award, at Strathmore Mansion, 11/5/09. Mr. Dandy is a multi-talented, multi-faceted and terrific person. He is celebrating a very special birthday at the end of October 2009. Councilwoman Valerie Ervin is Rev. Myers' champion, and sponsor for the Award! Stop in at Jim Dandy's Formal Wear next door to Kefa Cafe on Bonifant Street and congratulate him both on his Award and his birthday. Mr. Dandy is also a Notary.

Bob Colvin distributed ESSCA newsletter and announced that the Washington Revels are renting a building at Dartmouth Avenue and Dale Drive performed at Sligo Creek. ESSCA members are concerned about the shooting that occurred and we appointed George Lane to pursue the crime reports to obtain more information. The next ESSCA meeting is Monday, October 19 and Reemberto Rodriguez will be our guest speaker.

Directors Reports

Reemberto Rodriguez announced that a link was sent via e-mail for the status of major developments on an experimental spreadsheet which is located on page 9 of the packet.

Discussion:

- They are relocating pipe at the transit center and have more to do on Colesville Road which has to be done in a way to avoid disrupting traffic and work has been done on-site to prepare for the building.
- At the end of the first year it was suppose to be the end of Phase I and they where to re-open the end of Bonifant Street allowing only pedestrian access to the metro station according to Don Scheuerman is that date still good? Mel stated that the question was

raised recently but has not had an opportunity to discuss with Don to see if we are still on schedule.

- Do construction projects normally have charts with time-lines? When are we going to get to the point on public projects that community will be privy to a timeline and can track the progress? Reemberto responded that if the Board would like he could bring to the next meeting the complexity of the development process but was not sure whether any private and/or public development went the extra mile of defining in a non-technical way where they are going to be. In the spreadsheet that we want to make our working document that we zero in on what is the next opportunity for community input on each development and generically to ask what is the next step in the construction process. Reemberto suggested collectively he would like to do research on what this would look like and we will work with you.

Reemberto asked Board member to please let him know if they planned on accepting the invitation for October 24, Community Services Day to participate in Door Knocking before leaving this evening or by e-mail.

Montgomery County Civic Federation

Jim Humphreys reported that:

- The Civic Federation was formed in 1925 to promote civic, community and general welfare in Montgomery County. In recent years, the group has given special attention to schools, transportation, land use management, the environment, and the county budget. Our sole mission is to preserve and improve the quality of life for residents of the County. We provided assistance to associations and individuals whether they are members or not. My Committee is Planning and Land use which is essentially the Park and Planning Commission function, public safety, education, transportation, public finance, utilities, environment and Historic Preservation. Issues are presented to us, referred to the appropriate committee for research, investigation and recommendation after this process they are reported to the Executive Committee and Committee Chairs and the full Delegate Assembly will take into consideration and vote.
- The Montgomery County Civic Federation position on the 2009-2011 Growth Policy is in two parts the first section contains the MCCF position on the 11 recommendations in the Planning Board Draft Growth Policy approved by the Board on July 16. The second section contains the 12 changes to the Growth policy that the Civic Federation is suggesting County Council consider and adopt. The memorandum from the County Executive to Council President with comments on the 2009 Growth Policy is on page 26 of the packet.
- Planning and Land Use Committee started working on the Growth Policy in April when Planning Department came up with their 11 recommendations that they were going to make to the Planning Board. The Planning Board and Planning Department staff had discussions and on July 16 the Board adopted their recommendations. They did not approve three of the Planning Department recommendations but added two of their own and split one into two parts ending up with 11 recommendations to send to Council but they were different from what was recommended by the Planning Board Staff. Council is

the only one that has authority to approve the Growth Policy and by law they do this every two odd number years by November 15.

- We began working on the recommendations from Planning Department and when the Board adopted their policy on July 16 we started working on those 11 recommendations and responded to each. We realized they did not address our concerns after the policy was amended in 2007 and came up with our own changes to the Growth Policy and recommended it to Council.
- There are several key tools that the County uses to direct growth. First is the Master Plan and zoning telling you what can be built, where it can be built, what uses are allowed, and what density development is allowed for how big a building can be built. The Growth Policy is designed as a pacing mechanism and in order for the Planning Board to approve growth is when the County can assure that there is infrastructure to support that growth. In fact it was entirely devised to implement the Adequate Public facilities Ordinance of the County laws referred to as *Sec. 50-35(k) the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance states the Planning Board must not approve a preliminary plan of subdivision unless the Board finds that public facilities will be adequate to support and service the area of the proposed subdivision. Public facilities and services to be examined for adequacy include roads and public transportation facilities, sewerage and water services, schools, police stations firehouses, and health clinics.* Up until 2003 the growth policy included capacity ceiling every two years Council would approve the number of jobs and housing units that the Planning Board could approve in developments in the assuming two years for every policy area of the County and there are 21 policies area. For each of these 21 policies areas there are a number of jobs and dwelling units that could be approved each assuming two years. In 2003 capacity ceiling where struck down by County Council. In 2007 Growth Policy, Councilmember's Praisner and Elrich wanted to get back a policy area test and they worked with the Planning Department to get a test back for traffic and transit and came up with Policy Area Mobility Review, (PAMR). The Federation insisted that we needed a capacity ceiling reinstated in 2007 and it did not happen but we are still looking at this as a necessary pacing mechanism. PAMR creates a type of grid where the horizontal access is transit test and vertical access is the road test and what it does is balance the adequacy of one against the other. The Federation did not think this was a good idea because the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance states before subdivision is approved by Planning Department you need both adequate road and transit.
- The Federation stated that you need to look at the Master Plan for each area and what infrastructure is called for and decide individually if it has the adequate transit and road capacity called for in the Master Plan. If not developers can still get approval but will pay more for it and that contribution goes toward meeting the inadequacy.
- We asked that the test be split into two stand-alone tests one for transit and one for roads which we think makes more sense and is a more effective way of implementing the adequate public facility ordinance. *For complete details of the information presented please refer to your October meeting packet.*

Introduction and update from new Fire Chief, MC Fire/Rescue

Fire Chief Richard Bowers reported that:

- He has been a Career Firefighter in Montgomery County for 32 years and that his number one priority is public safety for all citizens of Montgomery County.
- Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services personnel consist of both career and volunteers and is one of the largest accommodation Departments in the Country. We have approximately a \$190 million dollar budget. Our personnel staff is a variety of units which include engines, ladder trucks, heavy rescue squads and EMS unit. They are either basic life support units or advance life support units. In addition to the EMS unit we have advance life support Paramedics and a few heavy ladder trucks that has paramedics assigned. We have the ability to focus on the critical calls we receive and respond to everyday. Critical calls are either a structural fire or advance life support.
- We are deploying our resources both career and volunteer trained as ALS providers and structural firefighters. They are able to combine on fire apparatus people that can provide EMS and structural firefighters making the rig versatile. We are an all hazards type of fire service meaning anything from broken water pipe to a structure fire, to someone having a heart attack. This information is important for the citizens of Montgomery County to know because the expectation is that County Government provide this type of service. We cover 500 square miles and approximately 1 million people in Montgomery County.
- Silver Spring is a high density area and there are far more calls because of the vertical landmarks and the compressed area of density.
- We are lacking in terms of resources in UpCounty, we just opened Station 22 Germantown/ Kingsview and that area has grown. We are getting ready to open a second station Germantown/Milestone in the northern part of the County. We have fire stations located in strategic areas but we need more units to absorb the number of calls other wise response time will began to go up.
- As the Fire Chief my job is to prevent the 911 calls and when received to send personnel that are trained and certified quickly. The biggest concerns in this area are fire and pedestrian safety. Pedestrian safety is one of the County Executive biggest initiatives and since July 4 we have had far too many pedestrian struck. There are numerous things that the County Executive, Police, Department Transportation and Fire and Rescue are doing and what I am asking you as the Citizens Advisory Board to do is look at the basics and when you have a crosswalk use it and to advocate out into the community.
- The Budget will impact Fire and Rescue Service. The County Executive, Chief Administrative Officer and County Council are committed to funding public safety but there is only so much money available in the budget and this will affect us. As Fire Chief I am committed to being very strategic in our budget preparation and in the budget submittal to the Executive. I will take everything into account to make sure public safety is not compromised. Staffing is a challenge and will continue to be but the County Executive and County Council have supported my strategic recruitment and staffing efforts.

Neighborhoods Committee

Megan Moriarty reported that:

- The last meeting summary is located on page 40 of the packet. We had a follow-up discussion on space for youth in downtown Silver Spring and it was decided that I talk

with Reemberto to clarify the outstanding questions left to be answered around the Civic Building before doing a survey or we reach out to more youth.

- Noelle from Impact gave an update about IMPACT Silver Spring collaboration with Liz Lerman Dance Exchange to work with adult and youth to create a large dance on Ellsworth Drive
- Heather from Gandhi Brigade gave an update on their Mixed Unity's peace summit planned for October 10 and informed us about their new program called Shared Visions which is the culmination of conversation between youth and adults.
- Lillian explained the IIFEST scheduled for October 17 in downtown Silver Spring. This will be a festival for learning opportunities with exhibits, cooking, contest, etc.
- Rebecca Howland, Sligo Creek Golf Association gave an update on the status of Sligo Golf Course. The Revenue Authority will turn the course over to Park and Planning on Oct. 1 if emergency funding legislation proposed by County Executive does not pass.
- Weed and Seed update: The new Broad Acres Park will be dedicated on September 23 at 6p.m. *(For complete details of the summary report refer to the October packet)*

Next Neighborhoods meeting – October 24 – the committee will be door knocking in lieu of our regularly scheduled meeting. CED and Neighborhood Committee will have a joint meeting on November 16 topic of discussion Fenton Village Forum

CED Committee

Phil Olivetti reported:

- Last meeting summary is located on page 42 of the packet. We had a good meeting and discussed a number of issues which are reflected in the summary.
- We have and Arts and Entertainment District revolving around the arts. The discussion was about dollars and what is the economic impact, how can you quantify this. I have discussed this with County and DED and have found no one has a clue as to how much in terms of \$ and cents the economic impact is because it's not tracked.
- Streetlight maintenance is a concern in the CBD and Neighborhoods. Phil asked that everyone find a burned out streetlight and report on the county website and keep a record of when reported and date the light is fixed and report at next CED meeting.
- Alan Bowser, former head of SSTCI and recently resigned member of SSCAB reported that the Civic Building should be completed July 2010. Town Center Inc., a not for profit group has been active organizing events for the A& E District and has developed expertise with putting together first class programming. Alan hopes the County will contract with SSTCI but budget constraints may create a problem in getting full funding (\$211,000). SSTCI is trying to become monetarily self-sufficient.

Jon Lourie is now President, of the 18 to 25 member SSTCI Board. Input for planning and design has been very represent of community leaders but questions exist about the political support for SSTCI. SSTCI envisions a big launch at opening with county officials and there will be a market demand for space. *(For complete details of the summary refer to your October packet)*

Action items

1. Update full board about SSTCI and also update board about the Civic Buildings facilities that will be available to the public.

2. Do we want to have some member of CAB to be appointed?
3. Alan would like some support for the SSTCI in form of a letter.

CED Committee approved the draft letter on page 45 recommending that the name of the Civic Building simply be name Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza for full Board approval.

Motion: The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board agreed to send a letter supporting that the Civic building simply be named Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza.

Chairs Report

Darian Unger reported that the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board Annual Retreat is on Saturday, November 14. We want to look at our relevance to the community, helpfulness and outreach to community and how we can make these things better.

Transportation and Pedestrian Safety

Darian Unger Reported that:

- The last meeting summary is on page 47 and there were no action items. Discussion was held with the police on several recent incidents.
- We discussed state's intersection rebuilds (improvements) along Colesville and Georgia Avenues that DOT is doing. Mel Tull and Tom Harmon met with MD DOT engineers and planners after the improvements which actually harmed pedestrian safety.
(For complete details of the summary please refer to the October packet)

Next Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Committee Meeting is on Wednesday, October 28

Growth Policy Discussion and Comments

Darian Unger commented that if the Board is going to take action now is the time because this issue goes to County Council in November. I would like input from Board members of Rollin Stanley presentation last month and Jim Humphrey's presentation this evening.

Jim Humphreys made a good point and that is one thing to do higher density development in places where you have transit stations and good transit but if we are doing development further out we are not serving any purpose. One issue is if what the County is proposing does not make it more difficult to do the next Clarksburg or put development where there is know transit than any smart growth being done in Silver Spring and close in will not have much useful affect on the County overall in terms of traffic or use of transit.

Both presentations were informative and Rollin Stanley did an excellent job of describing where the County is going over the next many years and in supporting development close to existing transit and infrastructure. However the questions I did not have answered were addressed by Mr. Humphreys. It seems Mr. Humphreys is saying that you should apply the existing law and test before approving particular projects and developer should pay their fair share of the additional burden on infrastructure. I agree with Rollin Stanley's overall vision and Jim Humphrey particular comments on how this should go forward.

We need to begin seeing the new future of Montgomery County and the Growth Policy is one way to be visionary and become smart about how we grow. We still don't have all the answers on how to deal with the problems now and they need to be answered.

Silver Spring is still congested, the presentation this evening was like the healthcare plan everyone wants something good but nobody wants to give up and in the details it gets pulled apart but we definitely need some kind of a growth policy in place.

How can we the Board communicate to our neighborhoods and community's what the Growth Policy is. Perhaps this Board could have some role to play in providing more information to make sure community's that are not on the most frequent civic association list be encouraged to show up at a public presentation that feature Jim Humphrey's, Rollin Stanley to give people and opportunity to better understand the policy because this is a critical issue. Maybe the Boards role should be to educate the community and find out what the issues are.

Meeting Adjourned 9:00 p.m.

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